

•and fiery passions. My life has been a struggle, with moments of rapture — a storm with dashes of moonlight — Love, Poetry

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• * * * = * # achieve the difficult undertaking. "With fair health I have no doubt of success, but the result will probably be fatal to my life."

My disposition is now indolent. I wish to be idle and •enjoy myself, muse over the stormy past and smile at the placid present. My career will probably be more energetic than ever, and the world will wonder at my ambition. Alas! I struggle from Pride. Yes! It is Pride that now prompts me, not Ambition. They shall not say I have failed. It is not Love that makes me say this. I remember expressing this feeling to Bulwer as we were returning from Bath together, a man who was at that moment an M.P. and an active one, editing a political journal and writing at the same time a novel and a profound and admirable philosophical work. He turned round and pressed my arm and said in a tone the sincerity of which could not be doubted: 'It is true, my dear fellow, it is true. We are sacrificing our youth, the time of pleasure, the bright season of enjoyment — but we are bound to go on, we are bound. How our enemies would triumph were we to retire from the stage! And yet/ he continued in a solemn voice, 'I have more than once been tempted to throw it all up, and quit even my country, for ever.'

All men of high imagination are indolent. I have not gained much in conversation with men. Bulwer is one of the few with whom my intellect comes into collision with benefit. He is full of thought, and views at once original and just. The material of his conversation and many a hint from our colloquies he has poured into his *England and the English*, a fine series of philosophic dissertations. Lockhart is good for *t&te-ti-t&tes*, if he like you, which he did me once. His mind is full of literature, but no great power of thought. He is an overrated man. But the man from whom I have gained most in conversation is Botta, the son of the Italian historian, whom I knew in Egypt, travelling as a physician in the Syrian dress — the most philosophic mind that I ever came in contact with. Hour after hour has glided away, while, *chibouque* in mouth, we have disserted together upon our divan, in a country where there are no journals and no books. My mind made a jump in these high discourses. Botta was wont to say that they formed also

¹ Paul Emile Botta, 1805-1870. He was afterwards French Consul **at** Mosul, and shares with Layard the honour of founding Assyrian archaeology.